

## 4: Stamford Standoff: Honour, Status and Rivalry in the Georgian Military

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Anyone who has studied military history will be familiar with soldiers' acute sensitivity to questions of precedence and honour. Most military historians take this for granted, although there is a growing appreciation that this type of phenomenon in the military is worthy of study, since institutional cultures can have a crucial operational significance.<sup>1</sup> Armies are hierarchical organisations, wherein formal rank is only achieved at great personal cost – be it by purchase, qualification or service – and where individual reputations are hard won and easily lost. These organisations have usually been all-male, and questions of status in the military have commonly been articulated in terms of masculine honour, creating further potential for rivalry and offence.<sup>2</sup> Christopher Duffy has noted that the officers of European armies in the eighteenth century were particularly 'rancorous and touchy'.<sup>3</sup> In the Georgian military, disputes between officers over apparently trivial matters routinely escalated into exchanges of insults, blows and challenges to duel. Recourse was made with surprising frequency to the formal military authorities to resolve disputes, whether by courts martial<sup>4</sup> or via the personal intervention of senior officers, the Secretary at War or even the King himself.

Nowhere was this truer than in England's militia. Reformed in 1757 as a parallel establishment to the regular army, it was officered by civilians who qualified by virtue of their social rank and landed property, and who thus provided 'natural' leaders to the civilian men who were balloted to serve in the county regiments. This equation of social with military rank may have simplified relations between militia officers – 'Sir *John* or Sir *Thomas* must

not be commanded by Squire *any thing*' – but had potential for tension when militia and regular officers came into contact with each another. Militia officers were at once aware of their social superiority to their regular counterparts, and were sensitive to accusations of military inferiority. As a correspondent to the *Gentleman's Magazine* complained: 'The present method taken for chusing the officers, and ascertaining their rank, has no regard to the necessary qualifications or abilities of the person to be commissioned'.<sup>5</sup> In general, the militia was from the outset vulnerable to comparison with the regulars. Although they were dressed and armed alike, the militia were by definition part-timers who were usually inexperienced in combat, and who often relied on NCOs from the regulars to conduct their training. The army slang terms 'parish soldier' and 'tame army' give a flavour of the standing in which the militia was held by the rank and file in the army,<sup>6</sup> and arguably the feeling was mutual.

Historians of the Georgian militia have had little to say about its relationship with the regular army. Although J. R. Western explains how the militia was born out of political hostility to the 'standing army', he does not consider whether this manifested itself in practice after 1757: he notes one incident at Stowmarket barracks in 1801 where a 'big fight' took place between regulars and militia.<sup>7</sup> Stephen Conway argues that, in the camps of the American War, 'contact between officers of the various militia and regular units was both frequent and largely amicable'.<sup>8</sup> A few examples will suffice to illustrate that this was not always the case. The *Morning Chronicle* reported that 'there was but little union between the regulars and militia' encamped near Portsmouth in 1778: the Cornish Militia and the 13th Regiment 'heartily, I believe, hated each other'.<sup>9</sup> Meanwhile, at Coxheath, General Keppel acquired a reputation for hostility towards militia officers. He objected to their habit of taking absence without leave, and clamped down upon it by means of courts martial and ordering them to their tents. When Mr. Joliffe, an officer in the Hampshire Militia and an MP,

complained about the quality of the men's bread, Keppel's reply was so high-handed that 'he immediately threw up his commission, ordered a chaise and four, and drove to town'. 'If Government was anxiously desirous of disgusting the militia,' mused the *Gazetteer*, 'they could not fix on any Lieutenant-General better calculated for that service'.<sup>10</sup>

This antipathy continued into the French Wars. A private letter of October 1801 reported a 'terrible fray' at Colchester, when 'some of the 29th Regt who being intoxicated chose to abuse the Militia in the Barracks of 2d York': 'their men coming to extreme disorder & blood must have been shed but unexpected & most fortunate General Balfour arrived in the midst of this Business, ordered every Man to keep in his Quarters & the 29th to d'part early next Morning'.<sup>11</sup> Unfortunately bloodshed was not always avoided. On Christmas Eve 1808, some militiamen of the North Lincolns were drinking in a public house in Colchester, when a party of the 4<sup>th</sup> Regiment of Foot arrived. The regulars demanded their place by the fire, which was granted them, and then proceeded to abuse the militiamen as 'feather-bed soldiers'. One of the regulars, Richard Costello, then became violent and struck William Wrach with a poker. He died from a fractured skull, and Costello and two other soldiers were tried at the Essex Assizes, receiving death sentences that were later respited.<sup>12</sup> The tragic outcome of this dispute sets it apart, but the dispute itself revolved around familiar issues of precedence and very gendered evaluations of what constituted a soldier.

This chapter will explore relations between the army and militia, and in particular their officers, by focusing on one regiment, the Lincolnshire Militia. Disputes of this kind appear to have dogged the regiment in its early years. In particular, it was involved in two related incidents in 1761 where minor questions of decorum escalated into major disputes that drew in the War Office and the King. By focusing on these two affairs in detail, this chapter will think about interpersonal conduct in the military more widely. Whilst Arthur Gilbert is right to characterise the Georgian officer corps as 'an exclusive club with its own

distinctive values’,<sup>13</sup> I will show how military discourse and honour codes were also indebted to civilian codes such as politeness, gentility and sensibility – and how their slightly different inflections on the parts of the army and militia could lead to conflict between these two branches of the service.

### **Stamford, April 1761**

The creators of the militia anticipated that the social rank of its officers could create ‘jealousy and complications’ between regiments, and so devised clear rules of precedence.<sup>14</sup> There remained confusion, however, about relations within regiments and with the regulars. Lincolnshire was one of the first counties to comply with the Militia Act, but was beset by conflicts of precedence from the off. Given the size of the county, the Lord Lieutenant divided the regiment in two. Sir John Cust was Colonel of the Southern Battalion: an MP for Grantham and later Speaker of the House of Commons, he had been an active supporter of the Militia Bill in parliament.<sup>15</sup> He was anxious to resolve which battalion should be shown favour, since ‘many Difficulties were likely to arise at their meeting’.<sup>16</sup> In May 1760 he wrote to the Secretary at War for clarification, who judged that the Earl of Scarborough’s Northern Battalion would take precedence due to the earlier date of his commission. Relations between the two battalions remained tense. After being stationed in Manchester, the regiment was ordered to return to the county for the winter. Cust raced the Southern Battalion back in order to obtain quarters at Lincoln, ‘the only good Town in the County’. Scarborough upbraided Cust for this ‘ungenteell’ action and, following an acrimonious correspondence, the South Lincolns were eventually quartered in Stamford instead.<sup>17</sup>

It was at Stamford that the South Lincolns were involved in a dispute with the 72nd Regiment, known as the Duke of Richmond’s. Such a dispute may well have been amplified by the fact that they were stationed in their own county: militia regiments were more usually

stationed away from home in wartime, so they may have felt more hostile to outside soldiers when on home territory.<sup>18</sup> We know about the incident in detail because the War Office created a letter book copying all sides of the subsequent correspondence between the Secretary at War Charles Townshend and the various protagonists. The existence of this letter book suggests that the War Office considered the dispute to be significant: as the militia was in its early days, it was an indication of likely further disputes, and a precedent for how to resolve them.<sup>19</sup> In addition, further letters in the Cust papers and in Lincolnshire Archives mean that over forty letters survive that relate to the affair. It was not reported in the press at the time, although two of Townshend's letters were widely reprinted after his death, as an example of how he was capable of handling 'a very delicate Occasion'.<sup>20</sup>

On 14 June 1761, the 72nd Foot marched towards Stamford, following a route prescribed by the War Office from their winter quarters in Yorkshire to a new posting on the south coast. The First Division under Major Thomas Troughar marched straight into town, without acknowledging that the South Lincolns were already quartered there. Lieutenant Colonel William Welby took umbrage at this, since it disregarded the convention that a body of troops entering a garrison should send an officer ahead to seek permission to do so. As he explained to Townshend: 'I thought I had a right as Commanding officer of the Garrison to have leave asked, before any Troops entered the Town; for I apprehend it is the rule of Discipline, and for the safety of the Garrison that those Ceremonies are always complied with.' Welby chose to overlook this, and ordered that they be granted all the civilities due to another regiment, including the parole and details of the town duty, and provided a sentry at Troughar's door and ordered the 'Centinels to rest [arms] to him'. Major Troughar sent his adjutant to explain that, 'he had no right to the Compliments paid him as being of a different Corps'. The Major himself then arrived, who insisted that, 'there was no sort of Connexion between us & them,' and that he would provide his own parole. As the Major left he passed

the sentry, who rested arms: 'the Major told him not to do it to him, the Militia man told him it was the order, but he said he had no right to rest to him, unless he (the Sentry) had been a soldier, the man replied he *was* a soldier'.<sup>21</sup>

Welby saw this as 'a great Slight to the Corps, and the Militia in general' and so took the unusual step of posting sentries at the entrances to Stamford, 'to prevent any armed Troops entering the Town for the future without my knowledge and consent'. So when the pioneers of the Second Division tried to enter the town on 17 June without sending advance word, the militia sentries stopped them at the point of their bayonets.<sup>22</sup> The militia corporal in charge of the guard approached Captain Morris of the 72nd and asked that they send an officer to Welby, but Morris cursed the corporal and the militia, and replied that, 'he would not be stoped by him, or anybody else'. The pioneers rushed forward and Morris attempted to brush away a sentry's bayonet with his espontoon, which grazed the sentry and would have stabbed him had it not hit his cartridge box. At length, Morris went to see Welby, where he explained that his regiment never had anything to do with the militia. By way of justification, he claimed that George II had once explained to Richmond that, 'they were the King's soldiers, & the Militia the Country's'. Welby replied that since they both received the King's pay, the militia 'were to be treated as much Soldiers as the Regulars'.<sup>23</sup> As they could not come to an agreement on this point, Welby resolved to write to the War Office.

Thus began a bad tempered correspondence that would preoccupy the Secretary at War for the following two months. Townshend wrote to Troughear, expressing that he was 'very seriously concern'd to find that any distinctions have been made between the different Corps of His Majesty's Army'. He enclosed a copy of Welby's account and invited the Major to comment upon it.<sup>24</sup> Troughear denied that he had made any remarks to the sentry and insisted that the militia had acted aggressively: Morris 'saw the Centinels present their Bayonets to the breasts of the Pioneers & refuse them admission into the town, without

giving any reason'. But he made no attempt to disown the remarks that he or Morris made about the respective positions of the army and militia, and indeed insisted that, 'no officer who bears the King's Commission, should be under the orders of those who have not the King's Commission'. He furthermore lodged a complaint about Welby's attempt to halt the 72<sup>nd</sup> regiment, given that they were marching a route prescribed by the War Office.<sup>25</sup>

Townshend's reply suggests that he took exception both to Troughear's tone and his claims.<sup>26</sup> It furthermore emerged over the course of the investigation that the 72<sup>nd</sup> Regiment had form in this regard, since complaints about their behaviour towards the Militias of Leicestershire and Essex came to light.<sup>27</sup>

Meanwhile, Welby wrote to Sir John Cust, detailing his view of the affair and alleging that the regulars had 'behaved unbecomingly'. Cust reassured Welby that he approved of his conduct, and proceeded to draft a letter for Welby to send to Townshend, wherein he pressed the militia's claims:

I beg leave to assure you, Sir, I have made it my particular study to cultivate Harmony and a good understanding between the two Corps, being sensible how very prejudicial any dispute must be to His Majesty's Service, I should not do justice to the Gentlemen of the army, if I did not take this opportunity of acknowledging that they have uniformly shown the same good disposition, and that I have been treated with the greatest Politeness and Civility from the officers of the several Corps we have met, till Major Troughear came into Stamford with the first Division of the 72<sup>nd</sup> Regiment.

Rather theatrically, he begged the Secretary at War to point out where he had been at fault: 'It is very natural for a gentleman who has liv'd upon his Estates without making Arms his profession, but who has taken them up occasionally to shew his zeal for His Majesty's

Family, person & government to fall into Mistakes'. He concluded by requesting that a special court martial be convened, composed of both militia and regular officers, to settle the case.<sup>28</sup> His request was not granted, and never could have been given that such a court would not have been possible under either the Articles of War or the Militia Act.

At length, Townshend sought to conclude the case by writing letters of censure to both Troughear and Welby on 12 June. In both cases he explained how he had reported the facts of the case to the King, and that the judgement therefore proceeded from him. Welby received the lighter censure: the King reaffirmed that he had a right to receive notice from an approaching regiment, and that he had a right 'to receive & pay those reciprocal marks of Civility & respect which in the course of Service usually pass'. On the other hand, Welby was informed that he exceeded his duty in posting sentries and preventing the 72nd from entering an open town: 'the consequences of the measure you took might have been extensive, and very fatal to the Regiments concerned'.<sup>29</sup> Townshend clearly intended this to be the end to the matter, but Welby wrote further letters contesting the verdict and pressing his request for a court martial.<sup>30</sup> Furthermore, Cust took up Welby's case. In a series of letters he took great exception to the censure aimed at Welby, which he perceived 'as a douceur to the Army or a sort of salvo to their Honour'.<sup>31</sup> His persistence on this point clearly irritated the Secretary at War: his brother Peregrine encountered Townshend in London, where he 'flew into a very great passion' and claimed that the actions of the South Lincolns 'wou'd in his opinion be a means of putting an end to ye Militia in this Country'.<sup>32</sup> Peregrine had subsequently to smooth things over with Townshend by thanking him for the trouble they had given him.

The censure sent to Major Troughear was more comprehensive. The King judged that he acted contrary to the practice of the army in refusing to accept the South Lincolns' marks of civility. He furthermore expressed his 'entire disapprobation of all distinctions' made



between the army and militia, contrary to ‘that Equality and harmony in Service which is so much to be wished & cultivated, both upon the grounds of private satisfaction and of public utility’.<sup>33</sup> In contrast to the militia officer, the regular officer appears to have accepted the judgement. (The affair did not appear to do his career any harm, since he was shortly promoted to Lieutenant Colonel and Deputy Governor of the Isle of Wight.<sup>34</sup>) Indeed, Townshend wrote to Welby reporting a conversation with Troughear, whereby he ‘expressed to me in the strongest terms, his sense & conviction, of the impropriety of his conduct’.<sup>35</sup> This *mea culpa* helped to bring the matter to a close, since Welby expressed his satisfaction with it and hoped that it would ‘effectually prevent all misunderstandings for the future’ between the army and militia.<sup>36</sup> As we will now see, his optimism on this point was to be short lived.

### **Lincoln, December 1761**

Later in the year, the South Lincolns’ other Lieutenant Colonel, Philips Glover, was involved in a comparable dispute with regular soldiers at Lincoln. According to Welby, Philips Glover was known for his ‘hasty temper and inconsiderate conduct’.<sup>37</sup> His correspondence with Cust reveals disputes with other militiamen and a quarrel over a bet.<sup>38</sup> Indeed, when the Lincolns had been stationed at Manchester the previous year, he been involved in a petty dispute in a theatre that had got out of hand. An apothecary named Jackson struck him on the back in jest, but Glover objected in the strongest terms so a duel with swords was arranged. Glover ran him through and killed him, for which he was tried at the assizes, but was discharged due to lack of evidence.<sup>39</sup> Glover found himself on trial again in February 1762, this time a general court martial for ‘having behaved in a Manner unbecoming an Officer and a Gentleman’. The published *Proceedings* provide a detailed account of an incident that again sheds light on the relationship between the army and militia.

On Christmas Eve 1761, Philips Glover was lodging at the Angel Inn in Lincoln. The Marines had been recruiting in the town, and their recruiting sergeant had a new recruit named Coupland with him. A militiaman from the South Lincolns recognised the recruit as a deserter from his company and clapped his hand on his shoulder declaring, 'You are my prisoner.' They could not find any militia officers to confirm this – they were 'gone out a Sporting' – so they took Coupland to Captain James Gardiner of the Marines. Later that day, Gardiner, Glover and various other gentlemen were at the Angel Inn, where the dispute apparently occurred. Lieutenant Edward Willes of the South Lincolns suggested that the deserter be taken to a Justice of the Peace so that the Corporal who enlisted him could swear to him being a deserter. Gardiner objected to this: the civilian authorities handled militia recruiting, and to do so would have been to forfeit his recruit, so he insisted that he remain under military authority. Glover said that he would write to the War Office, and Gardiner replied that he would not give up the prisoner until their answer was received. It was at this point that Glover uttered the words that prompted Gardiner to request a court martial: 'By God, he would not be bilked by him or any Regular.'<sup>40</sup>

The language that Glover used, and the tone that he employed, was exhaustively examined by the court martial. The term 'bilk', meaning to defraud or swindle, was deemed language 'which ought not to pass between one Officer and another'. He was asked whether he had also used the expressions, 'That he would shew the Regulars what their duty was?' and 'That he would trust no Regular?', both of which he denied.<sup>41</sup> Willes deposed that Glover 'seemed rather warm' and Gardiner was 'cool' at the point at which the prisoner was delivered to them. Other witnesses were questioned regarding Glover's tone. Reverend Moreton deposed, 'That Lieutenant Colonel Glover has not the softest Manner of expressing himself; but at the Time spoke with more than his ordinary Vehemence.' And Gardiner added that Glover, 'puts a greater Stress upon his Words, than other People do'.<sup>42</sup>

The most revealing aspect of the trial was the publication of letters that had passed between Glover and Gardiner. Both were aware that these letters would become matters of public record: indeed Gardiner published them in advance of the trial, which Glover alleged was an attempt to prejudice its outcome. In the first letter, Gardiner insisted that he would only release the prisoner on production of sufficient proof. Glover replied that he could provide ten men to swear to that effect, whereupon Gardiner claimed that Glover did not understand ‘what sufficient Military Proof of a Deserter is’, namely his attestation. He then launched into a diatribe about the respective mastery of military matters by army and militia officers:

In the Army, superior Rank implies superior Knowledge of Discipline, because it supposes superior Experience: but in the Militia, where Officers Rank merely from their Fortune, and where, from the Lieutenant Colonel to the Ensign, the Experience is all equal, I flatter myself common Candour will at least allow me to have as true and just an Idea of Military Discipline, as any Field Officer in your Service, who themselves have been instructed in what they know of it by Officers of my Rank, or inferior to it.<sup>43</sup>

Glover replied: ‘I can assure you, we are obliged to no Regulars for our Knowledge in Military Affairs; and what we have acquired by constant Application and Reading, the latter of which many in your Rank have not in their Power to do.’<sup>44</sup> In order to emphasise his point that the army are capable of making mistakes regarding military conduct, he referred the regular to Troughear’s acknowledgement of fault in the Stamford affair: this was also offered to the court martial but was deemed inadmissible.

After five days of trial, the court found the militiaman ‘guilty of having used some Expressions towards Captain Richard Gardiner not strictly becoming an Officer, which appear to have proceeded from Warmth, occasioned in Part by some Provocation on the part of Captain Gardiner’. Glover was ordered to receive a reprimand from his Colonel. Ironically, a later ruling from the Judge-Advocate’s Office revealed that Gardiner was not answerable to a court martial, as he was not actually an officer at the time of the offence. The King nevertheless expressed his disapprobation at his making ‘odious and unjustifiable Distinction between the Militia and his Majesty’s other Regiments’, and the Judge-Advocate trusted that this royal admonition was punishment enough.<sup>45</sup>

### **Honour, Status and Rivalry**

These two cases suggest the importance of interpersonal conduct in the Georgian military. By studying disputes that occurred when things went wrong, the historian can get an insight into the normal expectations of civility, precedence and honour that structured everyday interactions in the military. These disputes also show the sheer amount of time and effort that was expended on these matters by senior officers and the military authorities, suggesting how seriously they were taken. As we conclude this chapter with reflections on the nature of these disputes and what they tell us about the culture of the military, it is first worth considering the mechanisms that were used to resolve them.

Primary among these mechanisms was the court martial. Although the court martial ostensibly existed to maintain military law and discipline, the vague charge of ‘conduct unbecoming an officer and a gentleman’ could cover a wide range of interpersonal issues. As Alan Gilbert has argued, the military’s honour code could come into conflict with military law, so it was useful to have a charge flexible enough to encompass this.<sup>46</sup> What is striking about the court martial for ‘conduct unbecoming’ was that it was often requested by the

protagonists themselves. As we have seen, Gardiner was granted one, and Welby was probably only refused because of his unusual request about how it should be composed. There is a parallel here with recent work on the civilian courts, which has shown how Georgians ‘used’ the law to their own ends. Robert Shoemaker has suggested that Londoners had recourse to the courts to resolve public insults, although in the period when this was declining in the civilian sphere it showed no sign of doing so in the military.<sup>47</sup> It might seem surprising that soldiers should wish to do this, given the court martial’s rather negative historical reputation for the apparent arbitrariness of its verdicts and brutality of its punishments. But, as we saw in the Glover-Gardiner dispute, the court took its time to hear evidence from a number of witnesses, and the punishments that it delivered were ‘honour’ punishments – reprimand from superiors and royal admonition – that arguably befitted the charges. The prospect of being tried by one’s peers was attractive to soldiers, and especially so in the case of honour disputes. On the other hand, there appears to have been a wider public perception that soldiers were too quick to go down this route. One commentator on the Glover-Gardiner case suggested that it, ‘affords a caution to officers, not to be too precipitate in demanding courts-martial upon every frivolous altercation, the issue of which seldom redounds to the honour of either party’.<sup>48</sup>

Nevertheless, the court martial remained a useful means of resolving honour disputes between military men. This was particularly the case when a dispute was in danger of escalating into a duel, which was forbidden under the Articles of War: a court martial for ‘conduct unbecoming’ was a useful way of heading this off. Duelling is of course highly relevant to issues of masculine honour: it is a large subject in its own right, although some points are worth making here. Gender scholars have demonstrated how the duel was central to elite male notions of honour, as a means of demonstrating one’s refinement and courage.<sup>49</sup> Soldiers were disproportionately given to duel, comprising around a third of all duellists in

the mid-century and rising towards its end.<sup>50</sup> This was an aspect of elite masculinity that was peculiarly accessible to military men, so their willingness to duel was in a sense socially aspirational. Militia officers may have felt under even more pressure than their regular counterparts to go down the duelling route – as Phillips Glover did in Manchester – in order to prove their soldierly credentials. One prominent gentleman of the 1760s who was famous for duelling was the radical politician John Wilkes: he was a Lieutenant Colonel in the Buckinghamshire militia, an organisation that reinforced his claims to being a patriot and a classical warrior-citizen. By fighting duels, he was proving his martial *virtus* and virility, as well as making a claim to equality with the aristocrats he fought, by proving that he too possessed gracious courage and gentlemanly accomplishments.<sup>51</sup> The duel therefore serves to illustrate the overlap of military and civilian honour codes.

A further mechanism for resolving disputes was by requesting the intercession of the Secretary at War. War Office in-letter books show that a significant proportion of their correspondence concerned disputes between individuals. In June 1778, Lord Hardwicke wrote to Barrington in anticipation of problems when the militia was called out, asking what the procedure for settling disputes would be, ‘sh[oul]d any Regimental Differences arise, either ab[ou]t the Discipline of the Corps, or Behaviour of Officers to each other’.<sup>52</sup> Often these concerned issues of precedence: cases that hinged on dates of commission could usually be settled easily by the Secretary at War.<sup>53</sup> As the King’s minister, he was also the conduit for issues that had to be resolved by the Commander in Chief himself: the King personally got involved in both of the disputes studied here, even though they concerned the minutiae of everyday military interaction. The King was anxious in both cases to intervene where a dispute served to disrupt the ‘equality and harmony’ between the branches of the service.<sup>54</sup>

Although Peregrine Cust sought an audience with the Townshend in person, the Secretary at War usually conducted this kind of business by letter. The conventions of polite

correspondence therefore structured the way in which these disputes were resolved. The deferential conventions of letter writing, with its sensitivity to questions of honour and personal sincerity, were peculiarly apt for these kinds of dispute. The polite letter also blurred the distinction between public and private correspondence: Sir John Cust begged Townshend that he might ‘speak my mind freely to you upon this occasion, & to do it with more freedom I address myself to you in a private letter’, but the tone and content of this letter were in fact little different to his others.<sup>55</sup> The personality and epistolary style of the Secretary at War therefore had a significant impact on how issues such as this were handled. Barrington’s businesslike approach contrasts with that of Townshend, who had a reputation for being difficult and emotional. His biographer Sir Lewis Namier notes that his letters had a habit of finding fault ‘by putting forced constructions on what the other has said’: this is certainly perceptible in some of his correspondence on the Stamford affair and may partly be to blame for why it subsequently got out of hand.<sup>56</sup>

More generally, the code of politeness informed military behaviour. Politeness had come into vogue at the beginning of the eighteenth century, with the aim of softening male manners, moderating behaviour and easing social interaction.<sup>57</sup> This might seem incompatible with the masculinity of the soldier, but Philip Carter has shown how even the ‘man of war’ was expected to embrace polite manners.<sup>58</sup> Indeed, given the formality of military manners and the importance in the army of such ‘polite’ practices as bodily comportment, fine dress and heterosexual gallantry, soldiers took to the culture of politeness in a big way, and it continued to be important in the regular army even after it was losing vogue in civilian society.<sup>59</sup> Disputes could therefore occur where behaviour was perceived to be impolite: Welby complained that the 72nd Regiment acted ‘very contrary to ... polite behaviour’ when they entered Stamford.<sup>60</sup> And much of Glover’s trial hinged on his failure to live up to the polite standards of military interaction, from his choice of words to the tone of his voice.

‘Civility’ was a hugely important standard in military life, and the Stamford affair fundamentally concerned the 72nd’s failure to observe ‘reciprocal marks of civility and respect’, those rituals and courtesies that ensured the smooth running of military life.

Other aspects of civilian manners are perceptible in these disputes. The cult of ‘sensibility’ prized emotional expression and sincerity, and in the second half of the century it began to inform male manners, in part as an antidote to the potential falsity of politeness.<sup>61</sup> In contrast with the army, where politeness had such an enduring hold, I have argued elsewhere that the creation of the New Militia had been justified along sentimental lines, in terms of harnessing the patriotic and protective feelings of the male citizen.<sup>62</sup> It is perhaps significant, then, that it is in the correspondence of militia officers that we see regular recourse to the culture of feeling. Sir John Cust informed Townshend that Welby was ‘excessively affected’ by the censure in his letter: ‘such a reproof must lie very heavy upon a Gentleman who is conscious of his own good intentions’.<sup>63</sup> His whole corps were apparently ‘very sensibly affected’ by the way Welby had been treated.<sup>64</sup> Militia officers often had recourse to the language of feeling when pursuing a complaint with the War Office. George Buck, Lieutenant Colonel of the North Devonshire Militia, complained to Barrington that he had been wronged by his fellow officers: ‘Thus situated, superseded, and calumniated, I cannot express, being conscious of innocence, of integrity of conduct, and of zeal for the service, nor can any one, but an officer of sensibility, under similar circumstances, conceive the anguish of my mind!’<sup>65</sup>

Finally, these disputes give us an insight into the identity of the soldier, and in particular the different ways in which the regular army and the militia perceived themselves and each other. The officers of the 72nd sought ‘no connexion’ with the militia since they did not regard them as proper soldiers: as ‘the Country’s’ soldiers rather than the King’s, who did not hold proper commissions, and therefore should not be obeyed nor shown marks of



respect. The contempt between Gardiner and Glover was mutual. Glover was adamant that he would not be ‘Bilked ... by any Regular’, a group of people who he regarded as impoverished and illiterate. In the appendix to the printed *Proceedings*, the two antagonists took the opportunity further to explain and defend their conduct. Here, Glover revelled in the militia’s self identity as the constitutional force that patriotically defended Britain against invaders. He provoked Gardiner by characterising the job of the militia as defending liberty and property – ‘the latter of which you can have no Idea of’.<sup>66</sup> This prompted a lengthy reply from Gardiner, in which he reflected upon the identity of the regular soldier:

I must confess, I am no Man of Property, it is my Misfortune, not my Crime, that I am not; but there have been Officers who, with as little Property as I have, have fought nobly and gallantly for the Property of others; and though it never fell to my particular Duty to expose my Life at Home, for the Estates and Patrimonies of my Countrymen, [yet] I have ventured it in Action with our enemies Abroad... In regard to my Liberty, my Lord, I do from my Heart believe, that the Liberties of this Kingdom are as dear to the Soldiers of Great Britain, as to the Inhabitants of it.<sup>67</sup>

Whereas the critique of ‘standing armies’ would have it that regular soldiers were unpatriotic mercenaries and a danger to liberty, they did not appear to have imbibed this identity, and indeed saw themselves in quite the opposite light.<sup>68</sup>

In conclusion, then, it is hardly surprising that the Georgian army and militia had an antagonistic relationship. Set up as parallel establishments, they inevitably came into conflict in their day-to-day interactions. In a practical sense, they became rivals in recruiting, as we saw in the Glover-Gardiner case. The army was not permitted to recruit from the militia, and the army commonly complained that the militia ballot sapped their pool of recruits and that

its system of paying ‘substitutes’ pushed up the cost of bounties. More pervasively, the creation of two identical hierarchies with identical ranks, but where officers qualified in different ways and were unsure about questions of precedence, complicated everyday encounters between the branches of the service. As we have seen, the army and militia had contrasting identities that were defined against one another, which could lead to mutual distrust and even contempt. It is certainly possible to detect a defensiveness on the part of militia officers regarding their military status and expertise, and on the part of the army regarding their political status and social standing.

When studying the values and manners of officers, it is important to consider the extent of overlap between the military and civilian spheres. The court martial charge of ‘conduct unbecoming’ shows how the standards expected of an officer were inseparable from those of a gentleman. But it is possible that officers from the regulars and the militia – who necessarily had different relationships with mainstream society – inflected social codes in subtly different ways. The regular army’s commitment to a very formal model of polite masculinity, and the militia’s readiness to embrace the new civilian vogue for male feeling, suggest that the antagonism between them could often be a comedy of manners. From the point of view of military history, inter-service rivalry is worth studying in its own right; but the case of the militia and the regular army in the mid-Georgian period also promises to shed light on the relationship between the military and society.

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<sup>1</sup> Jeremy Black, *Rethinking Military History* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2004), p. 55.

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<sup>2</sup> David Morgan, 'Theater of War: Combat, the Military and Masculinities', in Harry Brod & Michael Kaufman (eds), *Theorizing Masculinities* (Thousand Oaks: Sage, 1994), pp. 165-82.

<sup>3</sup> Christopher Duffy, *The Military Experience in the Age of Reason* (London: Routledge, 1987), p. 76.

<sup>4</sup> Arthur Gilbert, 'Law and Honour Among Eighteenth-Century British Army Officers', *The Historical Journal* 19:1 (1976), pp. 75-87.

<sup>5</sup> *Gentleman's Magazine*, XXX, February 1760, p. 86.

<sup>6</sup> Francis Grose, *A Classical Dictionary of the Vulgar Tongue* (London, 1785), cols. PAW, TAP.

<sup>7</sup> J. R. Western, *The English Militia in the Eighteenth Century: The Story of a Political Issue 1660-1802* (London: Routledge, 1965), p. 428.

<sup>8</sup> Stephen Conway, *The British Isles and the War of American Independence* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 2000), p. 193.

<sup>9</sup> *Morning Chronicle*, 28 October 1778.

<sup>10</sup> *Morning Post and Daily Advertiser*, 29 June 1778; *Gazetteer and New Daily Advertiser*, 29 September 1778.

<sup>11</sup> Dorset History Centre, Dorchester, D29/F20F, Surtees to Fanny Hoare, 24 October 1801:.

<sup>12</sup> *The Morning Chronicle*, 18 March 1809; *The Bury and Norwich Post*, 22 March 1809. I am grateful to Joseph Cozens for this reference.

<sup>13</sup> Gilbert, 'Law and Honour', p. 75.

<sup>14</sup> From September 1759, regiments would take precedence according to their arrival in camp or garrison; from June 1760, it was decided that regiments would draw lots when serving together; and from June 1778, they would rank according to an annual ballot. W. Y. Baldry,

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‘Order of Precedence of Militia Regiments’, *Journal of the Society of Army Historical Research* 15 (1936), pp. 5-16 (p. 5).

<sup>15</sup> Lewis Namier, ‘Cust, Sir John, 3rd Bt. (1718-70), of Belton, Lincs’, *The House of Commons 1754-1790*, ed. Namier & Brooke, 3 vols., (London: HMSO, 1964), 3, pp. 290-1.

Cust attended a meeting of friends of the Militia Bill on 7 April 1759: Western, *English Militia*, appendix C.

<sup>16</sup> *Records of the Cust Family. Series III. Sir John Cust, Third Baronet*, ed. by Lionel Cust (London: Mitchell, Hughes & Clarke, 1927), p. 303, John Cust and Captain Vyner to Lord Barrington, 10 May 1760.

<sup>17</sup> *Records of the Cust Family*, pp. 306-7, Earl of Scarborough to John Cust, n. d. [October 1761].

<sup>18</sup> I am grateful to Stephen Conway for this observation.

<sup>19</sup> TNA, WO43/404. WO43 comprises in-letters to the Secretary at War on a wide range of subjects, illustrating the variety of issues with which he had to deal. As most of these are bound in-letters only, the letter book is unusual.

<sup>20</sup> *Gentleman's Magazine*, November 1767, pp. 758-9, Townshend to Major Troghear and Townshend to Lieut. Col. Welby, 12 June 1762.

<sup>21</sup> TNA, WO43/404, fol. 4, Welby to Townshend, 4 May 1761. My emphasis.

<sup>22</sup> TNA, WO43/404, fol. 10, Troghear to Townshend, 16 May 1761.

<sup>23</sup> TNA, WO43/404, fol. 5, Welby to Townshend, 4 May 1761.

<sup>24</sup> TNA, WO43/404, fol. 6, Townshend to Troghear, 12 May 1761.

<sup>25</sup> TNA, WO43/404, fols. 8-12, Troghear to Townshend, 16 May 1761.

<sup>26</sup> TNA, WO43/404, fols. 13-14, Townshend to Troghear, 18 May 1761.

<sup>27</sup> TNA, WO43/404, fols. 51-2, Townshend to Morris, 27 June 1761.

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<sup>28</sup> TNA, WO43/404, fols. 20-7, Welby to Townshend, 28 May 1761. The draft, which is identical, is dated 27 May: *Records of the Cust Family*, pp. 313-4.

<sup>29</sup> TNA, WO43/404, fols. 31-2, Townshend to Welby, 12 June 1761.

<sup>30</sup> TNA, WO43/404, fols. 35-6, 57-60, Welby to Townshend, 20 June 1761; Welby to Townshend, 29 June 1761.

<sup>31</sup> *Records of the Cust Family*, p. 316, Cust to Townshend (draft).

<sup>32</sup> *Records of the Cust Family*, p. 314, Peregrine Cust to Sir John Cust, 25 June 1761.

<sup>33</sup> TNA, WO43/404, fols. 33-4, Townshend to Troughear, 12 June 1761.

<sup>34</sup> *St James's Chronicle*, 3 February 1763.

<sup>35</sup> TNA, WO43/404 fols. 47-8, Townshend to Welby, 24 June 1761.

<sup>36</sup> TNA, WO43/404, fols. 57-60, Welby to Townshend, 29 June 1761.

<sup>37</sup> *Records of the Cust Family*, p. 320, Welby to Cust, 19 January 1762.

<sup>38</sup> *Records of the Cust Family*, pp. 310-12, 321.

<sup>39</sup> J. Conway Walter, *Records Historical and Antiquarian, of Parishes Around Horncastle* (Horncastle, 1904), pp. 244; *The London Chronicle*, 30 August 1760.

<sup>40</sup> *Proceedings of a General Court-Martial, upon the Trial of Lieutenant-Colonel Glover, of the South Battalion of Lincolnshire Militia. By Virtue of His Majesty's Special Warrant, bearing the date the 16th February 1762* (London, 1762), pp. 22-5, 7-8.

<sup>41</sup> *Proceedings*, pp. 8, 11.

<sup>42</sup> *Proceedings*, p. 47.

<sup>43</sup> *Proceedings*, pp. 28-9.

<sup>44</sup> *Proceedings*, p. 31.

<sup>45</sup> *Proceedings*, p. 69.

<sup>46</sup> Gilbert, 'Law and Honour', pp. 76, 78.

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<sup>47</sup> Robert Shoemaker, 'The Decline of Public Insult in London 1660-1800', *Past and Present* 169 (2000), pp. 97-131.

<sup>48</sup> *The Critical Review* 14, July 1762, p. 19.

<sup>49</sup> Pieter Spierenburg (ed.), *Men and Violence: Gender, Honor and Rituals in Modern Europe and America* (Columbus: Ohio State UP, 1998).

<sup>50</sup> Robert Shoemaker, 'The Taming of the Duel: Masculinity, Honour and Ritual Violence in London, 1660-1800', *The Historical Journal* 45:3 (2002), 525-45 (p. 540).

<sup>51</sup> John Sainsbury, *John Wilkes: The Lives of a Libertine* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2006), pp. 70-80.

<sup>52</sup> TNA, WO1/1000, fol. 92, Hardwicke to Barrington, 11 June 1778.

<sup>53</sup> TNA, WO1/1000, fol. 31, James Barker to Barrington, 6 October 1778.

<sup>54</sup> TNA, WO43/404, fols. 33-4, Townshend to Troughear, 12 June 1761.

<sup>55</sup> TNA, WO43/404, fols. 37-41, Cust to Townshend, 20 June 1761.

<sup>56</sup> Sir Lewis Namier and John Brooke, *Charles Townshend* (London: Macmillan, 1964), p. 3.

<sup>57</sup> Lawrence Klein, 'Politeness and the Interpretation of the British Eighteenth Century', *The Historical Journal* 45:4 (2002), pp. 869-898.

<sup>58</sup> Philip Carter, *Men and the Emergence of Polite Society: Britain, 1660-1800* (Harlow: Longman, 2001), p. 75.

<sup>59</sup> Matthew McCormack, 'Dance and Drill: Polite Accomplishments and Military Masculinities in Georgian Britain', *Cultural and Social History* 8:3 (2011), pp. 315-30.

<sup>60</sup> *Records of the Cust Family*, pp. 312, Welby to Cust, 19 April 1761.

<sup>61</sup> G. J. Barker-Benfield, *The Culture of Sensibility: Sex and Society in Eighteenth-Century Britain* (Chicago: Chicago UP, 1992).

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<sup>62</sup> Matthew McCormack, 'The New Militia: War, Politics and Gender in 1750s Britain', *Gender & History* 19:3 (2007), pp. 483-500.

<sup>63</sup> TNA, WO43/404, fols. 37-41, Cust to Townshend, 20 June 1761.

<sup>64</sup> *Records of the Cust Family*, p. 316.

<sup>65</sup> TNA, WO1/1000, fol. 37, Buck to Barrington, 11 December 1778.

<sup>66</sup> *Proceedings*, p. 32.

<sup>67</sup> *Proceedings*, p. 82.

<sup>68</sup> As argued by Hannah Smith, 'The army, provincial urban communities and loyalist cultures in England, c. 1714-50', *Journal of Early Modern History* 15 (2011), pp. 139-58.